

China lifts Beijing martial law

BEIJING (AP) — China said it would lift martial law in Beijing Thursday, declared the capital stable and said the army had won a great victory in crushing protests over last week's Tiananmen Square. Premier Li Peng announced on national television that the country's "internal situation is likely to end in a state of stability" were no longer needed. But Western diplomats and Chinese sources said the move would not restore tight security in the city and was largely intended to improve Beijing's image abroad. "The situation in the capital and the whole country has become stable, social order has returned to normal and a great victory has been won in crushing the turmoil and quelling the counter-revolutionary rebellion," Li said. Wearing a smart Western-style suit and speaking against a backdrop of leaves, Li was a picture of moderation and spoke in measured tones. His comments contrasted sharply with his announcement nearly eight months ago that the army was moving into Beijing to end pro-democracy示威 by a "tiny handful of people." Then, he wore a Mao suit, a symbol of Marxist orthodoxy, and sharply condemned his tough speech by shouting his list.

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PLO official says Baker plan flopped King holds talks with Kaddoumi

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday received the head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) foreign affairs, Farouq Kaddoumi, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Petra did not give details except that Kaddoumi was accompanied by several PLO officials. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem attended the meeting, it added.

It was believed that Kaddoumi briefed the King on the latest developments in the Palestinian scene and efforts to advance the peace process.

Earlier, in an arrival statement, Kaddoumi said that an initiative for Palestinian-Israeli dialogue by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker flopped.

"We consider the Baker plan a failure since it does not respond to our demands," said Kaddoumi.

King meets U.S. senator

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein met at the Royal Court Wednesday with U.S. Congressman James Tower. The King and Tower discussed the latest developments in the Middle East and reviewed efforts towards settling the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Israel fails to respond to Baker bid for dialogue

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel failed Wednesday to respond to an American bid to convene Israeli-Palestinian talks but said Middle East peace efforts were still alive.

"There are some problems to be solved but we believe the process is very much alive," foreign ministry spokesman Moti Amitai told reporters.

Israel's 12-man inner cabinet met but offered no response to the latest American bid to advance an Israeli proposal for Palestinian elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel Radio said the policy-making inner cabinet would act only after Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin returned next week from a trip to Washington.

On Tuesday, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was reported frustrated with delays in convening Israeli-Palestinian talks on an Israeli election proposal prompted by the 25-month-old uprising in the occupied territories.

A participant at Baker's meeting with Norway's Foreign Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik told reporters the secretary of state might soon decide to devote his time to other world matters "where there was some hope of getting things done."

The State Department said a preparatory meeting that month of Israeli, Egyptian and American foreign ministers was in doubt for lack of progress.

Israel Radio said Baker, in an

down. "The PLO has continuously affirmed that we are for peace and we have submitted our own peace proposal, but the U.S. and Israel have stood against this proposal," Kaddoumi told Petra.

"We know that the United States' policy has always been in favour of Israel and we are constantly on guard regarding these policies... the United States' moves are not in the right direction," he said.

In Cairo, PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the peace process.

Israeli officials are demanding U.S. guarantees that the PLO will have nothing to do with any negotiations.

The PLO has to choose and announce its delegation to the meeting (with Israel) and it is not the right of anybody to object to that," Kaddoumi said.

Kaddoumi also said Palestinian-Israeli talks should be "open and not only aimed at holding elections" in the occupied territories.

He said the talks should be launched under international supervision and "the meeting itself should be a preliminary step towards holding an international peace conference on the Middle East."

to the elections," he said on Israel Radio.

Israeli Radio reported that Baker told Norway's Bondevik in a Monday meeting that he was prepared to "throw up his hands" in the Middle East and concentrate his efforts on areas of the world where he can more easily find success.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Baker called Egyptian Foreign Minister Esamat Abdul Meguid to discuss a planned meeting between Abdul Meguid, Baker and Arafat in Washington.

"As long as there is hope, there is reason to be engaged," Tutwiler said. But she added: "He's also a realist. If the parties are serious he will continue to work with them."

The tripartite meeting was scheduled to be held this month, but was postponed until February due to unresolved differences over the PLO role and the agenda for the proposed Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo.

It is absurd to have a meeting if the meeting resolves nothing," Tutwiler said.

The meeting of the three foreign ministers was the cornerstone of Baker's five-point plan.

It was designed to reach agreement on the composition of a Palestinian delegation that would meet with Israeli officials in Cairo to discuss Israel's elections proposal.

Aoun's press office did not comment on the report.

The general has been advised to use the dollar as legal currency replacing the Lebanese pound to counter sanctions applied against his administration by the government of President Elias Hrawi, the paper reported.

It said Aoun has appropriated all military funds assigned to Lebanese embassies in Paris, London, Washington and Brussels, which were estimated at tens of millions of dollars.

The move apparently followed the sending of a circular to these embassies by Salim Al Hoss, prime minister in Hrawi's cabinet, to freeze all purchases of arms and military spare parts.

Al Safr said that a \$500,000 monthly subsidy from a "certain Arab state" to provide food and



Michel Aoun

medication for the Lebanese army has been transferred to Aoun's personal account.

Moscow to upgrade ties with PLO, Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze told a visiting Israeli minister Wednesday the Kremlin planned to upgrade relations with Israel and at the same time announced the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would have a full embassy in Moscow.

The Soviet move came amid signs U.S. diplomatic efforts to arrange a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue had stalled and was accompanied by a renewed call for an international peace conference.

Meanwhile, a Soviet Aeroflot TU-134 plane landed at Ben-Gurion International airport near Tel Aviv, the first Soviet plane to bring Jewish immigrants on a direct flight from Moscow.

Israel expects up to 50,000 Soviet Jews to arrive this year and attaches great importance to a recent agreement on direct flights with the Soviet Union that would help channel the exodus to Israel instead of the United States.

The Soviet plane took back 52 Soviet teenagers from Chernobyl area who had been exposed to radiation during the 1986 accident at the nuclear plant there. The children spent three weeks in Israel on a holiday and were checked by Israeli doctors.

The Soviets refused to allow Arye Levin, Israel's consular representative in Moscow, to attend the meeting because he lacked the proper diplomatic status, Weizman said.

"I told them this must change and then, in light of this... we spoke of the change in status," Weizman said.

Weizman also said Shevardnadze promised to intervene with Syria and Iran to help account for at least six Israeli soldiers missing in action or captured in Lebanon by Iranian-backed groups.

The Weizman-Shevardnadze meeting in Moscow upset the Israeli foreign ministry because Levin was not allowed to attend it, and the ministry had asked Weizman to cancel the talks, Israel Radio said.

At the same time, the Soviet news agency TASS announced the Soviets were upgrading the status of the PLO mission in Moscow to "an embassy of the government of Palestine."

The Soviet side expressed its readiness to conduct talks on regularizing the status of the consular groups of both countries, TASS said, referring to Israel and the State of Palestine.

The move stops short of renewing full diplomatic ties with Israel, which were severed by the Soviet Union over the 1967 war.

Weizman, speaking from Moscow, said on the radio that Shevardnadze told him the Israeli and Soviet diplomatic missions

disbanded Communist Party, with him are an unknown number of junior politicians, ex-government officials and members of dissolved professional organisations and trade unions.

In a dispatch from Khartoum, Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported in Cairo that Sudanese Information Minister Ali Shummo Said Mahdi was released because no proof of corruption had been found.

The official Sudan News Agency (SUNA), which distributed Salih's comments, said Mahdi's release was part of the celebration of Sudan's 34th independence anniversary Jan. 1.

Only one of the party leaders and other senior politicians imprisoned when a 15-man junta ousted Mahdi in a bloodless coup on June 30 remains in jail, Ibrahim Nugud of the

Tehran accepts Soviet mediation

MOSCOW (AP) — Iran has given the go-ahead to resume stalled peace settlement talks with Iraq, and this time they will be mediated and hosted by the Soviet Union, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Wednesday.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati sent a message to Moscow saying Iran was willing to resume the talks, which stalled this April in Geneva, Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady I. Gerashov said.

Iraq had already agreed to the Soviet proposal for trilateral talks, so "now it is possible to start the practical working-out of this question," Gerashov told a Moscow briefing.

He said he had no details on when and where the talks would be held.

Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze, during an official visit to Iran in August, had offered the Soviet Union's help in mediating the deadlocked talks.

At the time, Tehran Radio quoted Shevardnadze as saying the Soviet Union was willing to exploit good relations with both Gulf war foes in an effort to further the talks.

The Soviets have leverage with Baghdad as Iraq's main supplier in the Gulf war, and Iraq and the Soviet Union are bound by a treaty of friendship and cooperation.

Tehran also has signed big gas deals with Moscow along with other trade agreements, reversing years of bad relations with the Soviet Union when it had been grouped with America as a "great Satan."

No progress was reported at the last round of direct negotiations between Velayati and Iraqi Foreign Ministry Tariq Aziz, held in Geneva in April.

Mahdi moved to house arrest

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan's military government released former Prime Minister Saadq Al Mahdi from prison Wednesday but kept him under house arrest, the junta's top security official said.

Colonel Bakri Hassan Salih, leader of the government's security committee, said another politician, Mahdi's former deputy and Foreign Minister Sidahmed Al Hussein, also was allowed to leave jail but remained restricted to quarters.

The official Sudan News Agency (SUNA), which distributed Salih's comments, said Mahdi's release was part of the celebration of Sudan's 34th independence anniversary Jan. 1.

The spiritual leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Mohammad Osman Al Minghani, released from jail and put under house arrest last month after nearly six months

in detention, left for Britain Wednesday for medical treatment, SUNA added.

The DUP and Mahdi's Umma Party, outlawed by the junta with all other political parties, were partners in four of the five coalition governments formed by Mahdi's during his three-year rule.

Hassan Al Tourabi, leader of the militant National Islamic Front (NIF) party, was switched from jail to house arrest last month.

On seizing power Basit imposed a nationwide state of emergency, suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament and trade unions.

He was repeatedly vowed never to allow a multi-party system in Sudan, Africa's largest country and one of its poorest.

His coup was Sudan's fourth military takeover since independence in 1956 from Anglo-Egyptian rule.

Iraq reviews Turkey's decision

BAGHDAD (AP) — The entire Iraqi leadership met Wednesday to discuss Turkey's decision to cut the flow of water in the Euphrates River for a month, state-run radio reported. Baghdad Radio said President Saddam Hussein chaired a meeting of the Revolutionary Command Council and the regional command of the Baath Party to discuss "technical and political aspects of Turkey's decision to cut the Euphrates water." The radio did not give further details, but said all necessary measures will be taken to overcome problems. Ankara decided to block the water starting from Jan. 13 to fill its newly built Ataturk Dam on the Euphrates in southern Turkey. Turkish officials announced the cut months ago and increased the flow of the river ahead of time, saying both Iraq and Syria should be able to cope with the extreme shortfall in the water of the river by storing extra water ahead of time. But Iraq had announced that the cut, not expected to dry up the river because of downstream tributaries, will drastically affect agriculture in central and south Iraq.

Schools opened in West Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — More than 320,000 Palestinian students returned to classes in the occupied West Bank Wednesday, two months after schools were closed by the Israeli occupation authorities.

The United Nations-run schools opened for the new school year, which is expected to run until July 8.

Military authorities ordered an early end to the West Bank school year last Nov. 13, two days before Palestinians marked the first anniversary of the declaration of a Palestinian state.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, the army delayed the reopening of schools from Thursday to Monday without giving a reason. They have remained open through most of the revolt.

Palestinian nationalists in the Gaza Strip had killed two fellow Arabs on suspicion of helping Israeli forces, Palestinian and Israeli sources said.

Israeli soldiers in the Gaza Strip demolished a house in Beit Hanoun village on charges an occupant helped in the kidnapping and killing of an Israeli soldier.

The army also notified owners of four West Bank houses sealed up last Sunday that they would be demolished.

Soldiers shot and wounded two children during clashes in Jabalia and Nusseirat refugee camps in the Gaza Strip Wednesday. A 10-year-old girl from Nusseirat, shot in the chest, was reported in serious condition.

Shi'ite militias battle with renewed fury

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — Rival Shi'ite Muslim militias clashed with renewed fury in South Lebanon Wednesday, spurning mediation efforts by Iran.

The pro-Syrian Amal and Iranian-backed Hezbollah (Party of God) militias rained artillery shells and rockets on each other's positions for the 19th successive day, sending terrified villagers scurrying for cover.

Both groups, fighting for leadership of Lebanon's 1.5 million Shi'ites, denied statement by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Besharati Tuesday that a ceasefire had been agreed.

The sources said the militants shelled each other's positions in the villages of Ain Qana, Ain Bousar, Jarjoub and Arsalbain in the Iqlim Al Tufah area, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

There were no reports of casualties from the six-hour non-stop barrage, the fiercest in five days. At least 76 people have been killed and 280 wounded since fighting erupted on Dec. 23.

Scores of villagers fled their homes. Many who fled earlier had just returned, thinking the fighting had eased.

Political sources said Besharati

assured who arrived in Beirut Sunday, met separately Tuesday with leaders of Amal and Hezbollah.

Muslim sources told Reuters the Iranian envoy, in several hours of talks, failed to persuade Hezbollah to withdraw from five villages seized from Amal in street-to-street battles.

The sources said the fundamentalist Hezbollah asked for guarantees that a peace pact signed last year with the more secular Amal would be implemented. Amal has said Hezbollah must quit the villages before any talks can start.

The peace pact stipulated that Amal would be responsible for security in South Lebanon, but that Hezbollah could conduct political, religious and cultural activities there.

The agreement also allowed Hezbollah to launch guerrilla attacks against Israel from the south and called for the reopening of Amal offices in Beirut's southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold. The offices remain closed.

Hizbullah ousted Amal fighters from the western Bekaa Valley last month. More than 900 people have been killed in the almost two-year-old feud.

Political sources said Besharati

assured Turkey's semi-official Anatolian news agency:

"The talks had a different atmosphere from all previous discussions on the issue and for the first time we have used a common language."

The Kuwait meeting was the second in a series started before the fall of Bulgaria's hardline Communist leader Todor Zhivkov in December.

Bulgaria's BTA news agency quoted Dimitrov as saying he had proposed a joint agreement binding both countries to abide by the human rights principles of the United Nations and the Helsinki final act. Yilmaz made no reference to such a proposal.

Ties between Turkey and its Balkan neighbour were strained last year when 300,000 ethnic Turks crossed the border to escape a campaign of forced assimilation.

Reformist leaders who took power in December have ended the assimilation policy and restored minority rights.

Israel, UNRWA clash over Palestinian aid

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel and the United Nations clashed Tuesday over the role of a U.N. refugee agency in aiding Palestinians during the uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Giorgio Giacomelli, commissioner-general of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), said Israeli leaders expressed concern in talks that his organisation was exceeding its mandate by aiding non-refugees and running an undercover observer force.

"What I cannot share is the manifest intention of putting a squeeze on us, putting us under tutelage and control as if we were part of the (Israeli) civil administration," he told Reuters.

Israeli sources said Shmuel Goren, the defence ministry's top administrator for the occupied territories, denied trying to restrict UNRWA but insisted the agency must not exceed its mandate to provide humanitarian services for refugees.

Giacomelli said the U.S. secretary-general and the General Assembly asked UNRWA to extend temporary exceptional assistance to all needy Palestinians during the emergency created by the 26-month-old uprising.

Similar measures had been taken during the Lebanese civil war. The aid was mainly food rations and medical treatment for casualties of clashes with the Israeli army.

Ben Ali's party gives ground on electoral system, media

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia's ruling party, which holds all the seats in parliament, yielded to opposition pressure Tuesday and accepted the principles of reforming the electoral system and giving the opposition a voice in the official media.

Opposition leaders said they were pleased with the outcome of a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Hamed Karoui and attended by Abdul Rahim Zouari, secretary general of the ruling Democratic Constitutional Union (RCD).

President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali called the meeting of the so-called National Pact Council last week to deal with opposition complaints that the democratic experiment he launched two years ago had come to a dead end.

Zouari told Reuters after more than three hours of talks in Karoui's office: "The council has come to the conclusion that one of the priorities is amending the electoral code and has decided to put the suggestion to president Ben Ali."

"We are proposing that political pluralism be introduced in

Giacomelli said his talks with Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and Goren had helped clear up "an accumulation of misundertstanding, suspicion and concern" over UNRWA's role.

Israeli officials have accused the agency of channelling aid to uprooting activists on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The UNRWA chief said he would accept money "even from the devil," but only to fund the agency's publicly approved humanitarian programme.

He said while Israel and the U.N. agency could not see eye-to-eye on all matters, they shared an interest in limiting the bloodshed, economic and human damage of the uprising.

Some 300, of the 1.75 million Palestinians in the occupied territories are refugees.

Giacomelli said UNRWA had to slash its operating budget of \$240 million by six per cent in real terms this year, mainly because of a cut in the contribution of the United States, the biggest donor.

The agency did not yet have any money to cover emergency relief services in Lebanon and the occupied territories for the second half of 1990, he said.

Citing the need to resettle other refugees, Washington cut its UNRWA contribution from \$67 million two years ago to \$61 million last year and \$50 million in 1990.

Health standards

U.S. Secretary of Health Louis Sullivan said Tuesday that standards of medical care were markedly lower in the occupied territories than in Israel.

Sullivan, on a visit to meet Israeli health officials, said the lower quality of Palestinian health care pre-dated the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank but new problems had arisen during the Palestinian revolt.

"There is common recognition between the Israeli officials and the Palestinian officials that the health status of the Palestinians is not as good as that of the Israeli citizens," Sullivan told reporters.

Sullivan said Palestinian health officials told him during talks that their infant mortality rate was higher than the Israeli rate and only a quarter of Palestinians had medical insurance, compared with 96 per cent of Israelis.

"As a result of this there are problems with them being able to afford health care," Sullivan said before boarding a flight to Cairo for talks with Egyptian officials.

The Palestinian uprising had complicated medical care, with budget cuts forced by a lack of tax revenue and the movement of patients obstructed by curfews, Sullivan said.

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U.S. must blame Shamir

NOW that the projected meeting between the foreign ministers of Egypt and Israel with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has been effectively put on the back burner as has long been anticipated, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is shedding crocodile tears over this development. Nothing suits more the designs of Shamir and all the enemies of peace that walk behind him than to see the entire peace process in the Middle East derailed for the umpteenth time. It is common knowledge that Shamir is determined to procrastinate over the hard decisions that have to be taken in order for the peace process to have a chance, and is comforted whenever an initiative or proposal to get him on talking terms with the Palestinians gets bogged down.

There is no doubt that this time around, Baker's five-point plan was nipped in the bud by Shamir right from the word go. His refusal to entertain a role for the PLO was his prescription to deal a death blow to the whole idea and he knew this all along. Once again Shamir and like-minded Israelis have become the real villains in getting the peace process to a dead end and now is the time to speak out more openly about where the responsibility lies for this unfortunate state of affairs in the Middle East. Since all the fingers are pointed in the direction of Shamir and the hard-liners in Israel as the real culprits for strangulating the only peace proposal on the negotiating table, Washington is duty-bound to spell out this fact for the entire world to hear. There are no more legitimate or reasonable excuses left to the U.S. to push up the direct responsibility of Israel for killing off yet another sincere effort to get the Israelis and Palestinians around the negotiating table, and is invited to reveal the guilty party. It serves no useful purpose to keep Israel unexposed and unidentified as the principal obstacle to peace in the Middle East. It is only through naming the guilty party at point blank would the Israeli people begin to reconsider their views and options, while the international community crystallises its final judgement in no uncertain terms about how to proceed henceforth and how to deal with Tel Aviv.

The remaining question is where the parties to the Middle East conflict can go from here, now that there are no more peace initiatives still living and kicking. A more determined effort by the international community to break the Israeli ice about the indispensable role of the PLO in any meaningful negotiations to resolve once and for all the Palestinian case is the best that it can perform at this stage. Now that there are cracks in the Israeli wall against accepting the PLO as the principal party in any responsible negotiations leading to peace and harmony between the Palestinians and the Israelis, it should not be too difficult to widen these cracks and make the Israeli wall of defiance tumble as the Berlin Wall has done in 1989.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday commented on King Hussein's statement at a meeting with an American delegation Tuesday in which he exposed Israel's intransigence vis a vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since its creation on Arab soil in Palestine, Israel has not displayed any sign of its genuine desire for peace and has since 1967 been directing its policies towards aggression, the paper noted. King Hussein explained these facts to the visitors in the course of reviewing the situation in the Arab region, urging the American public opinion to help end the conflict in the region and bring about a just peace not only in Palestine but also in Lebanon and the Gulf region, the paper added. King Hussein said as the Israelis were adopting a hardened position, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Arab nation at large have been offering a hand of peace and seeking to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions based on justice and ensuring an independent state for the Palestinian people in Palestine, the paper noted. It said that the King has again urged the world community to help the Middle East live in peace.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday comments on the situation in the local markets with the absence of sufficient meat that used to come from Romania and other Eastern Bloc countries. "I really wish that imported meat stopped so that our farmers can have the incentive to produce more meat for the market, and our young educated men turn their attention to farming instead of seeking jobs in offices," says Tareq Masa'weh. The writer recalls the days when Jordanian families used to be self-sufficient of all food supplies because they used to keep sheep and grow food, and says: "If we love our country we must begin changing our life style and turn our attention to exploiting our resources, our land and our livestock so as to become self-sufficient and stop importing food supplies from other countries". The writer calls on the Jordanian public to consume what is being produced locally and to stop a life-style that prevailed in Jordan during the boom years of the 1970s. The writer says that Jordanians have to offer sacrifice so that they can have a brighter future and end their dependence on others.

Al Dastur Arabic daily said that King Hussein advocated the PLO's ideas for peace based on justice and presented the Arab nation's views which support the PLO. He said that the PLO which represents the Palestinian people has been offering peace to Israel in exchange for land, but the Israelis were adamant in their position and they refuse to give the Palestinians their rights and their lands, the paper noted. It said that the peace onslaught launched by the PLO is feared by the Israelis who are continuing to oppress the Palestinian people under their rule and continue the drive to colonise Palestine. King Hussein, the paper said, told the American delegation that Israel was defying the will of the international community and refusing to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions which can bring about a lasting peace to the region. It said that the United States which helps Israel shoulders a great responsibility as a superpower to establish peace based on justice.

East Europe's wary reformers watch new leaders

By Nicholas Phythian
Reuters

VIENNA — Veterans of the street protests that smashed the Communist hold on power in Eastern Europe are watching their new leaders like hawks, fearful that prize of democracy will be snatched from under their noses.

With the first free elections in four decades just months away, the votes of the East Bloc's reawakened masses are up for grabs.

But many former dissidents say the Communists, in the guise of reformers, are trying to cling to power by sabotaging the democratic process.

"The people are unhappy. Every day workers come to see me and say 'why did you carry out the revolution. Can't you see that the same old people are still in power,'" veteran Romanian dissident Doina Cornea said in the town of Cluj.

"We are angry because the old Communists are still in power but they are using a different name. Nothing has changed," said a 21-year-old Bucharest student.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev let the genie of people's power out of the bottle with his glasnost and perestroika reforms.

Bloodily in Romania, peacefully, elsewhere, his East Bloc Communist allies have been forced to relax their grip on power, leaving the Soviet Union the only Warsaw Pact country that has not abandoned or promised to abandon old style, one-party rule.

While Gorbachev treads a delicate path between the demands of the Soviet Union's increasingly restive nationalities and hardline Communists, opposition activists elsewhere are giving notice that people's power must mean just that.

"Down with the Communists," chanted 100,000 marchers Monday in Leipzig, where East Germany's reform movement began. "The East German opposition,

their eyes fixed on free elections in May, have threatened to return to the streets and call strikes if the Communists do not give them more say.

They accuse reform Communists still in power of denying them the means of campaigning properly and of spreading fears of a neo-fascist revival to disguise a return of the hated Stasi security police, officially disbanded last month.

In Romania, the students, one of the few groups that can mobilise nationally, have been the most vocal critics of the National Salvation Front, the provisional government since the December overthrow and execution of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

"We can repeat Timisoara, we can repeat Bucharest," a student leader told a mass weekend rally, referring to the bloodiest actions of the Romanian revolution.

Several thousand students from all over the country, who packed a hall in Bucharest Polytechnic, cheered wildly when one of their leaders said no former Communists should be in power after free elections planned for April.

In Hungary, the opposition accuses the reform Communists in power there of bugging and snooping on non-Communists ahead of free elections planned for March.

"I think we cannot trust the present government," said Laszlo Kovar, leader of the opposition youth group Fidesz.

In Bulgaria, the reform Communist government and the opposition leaders are united over the needs to restore the rights of the country's Muslim minority.

But the opposition accuses Communist hardliners of fanning nationalist unrest over the issue, which revives bitter memories of 500 years of Ottoman rule, to hang onto power.

"The anti-reformists are trying to fight their last battle over the ethnic issue," said Zhecho Zhelev,



president of the opposition umbrella Union of Democratic Forces.

The Gorbachev gamble is that the Communist parties of Eastern Europe have the organisation and popular support needed to hold their own against an opposition that has barely had time to collect its thoughts.

In Poland, where the Solidarity trade union spearheaded the drive towards democracy, this did not work.

Poles ended 45 years of Com-

minist rule last September when Solidarity Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki took power following largely free general elections.

In Romania and Czechoslovakia, it is too late for the Communists with a legacy of bitterness equating their rule with repressive Stalinism.

Bulgarian Communists, who sacked hardliner Todor Zhivkov in November, have relaxed state controls, promised elections and leaving it in a clear minority in the interim coalition running the country until free elections promised by June.

Prime Minister Hans Modrow says new laws will give everyone an equal election chance.

But in Czechoslovakia, where former dissident playwright Vaclav Havel is now president, the pace of Communist change is apparently not fast enough.

Two leading Communist ministers have taken matters into their own hands, quitting the party and leaving it in a clear minority in the interim coalition running the country until free elections promised by June.

Austria seeks its place as East Bloc Communism dissolves

By David Storey
Reuters

VIENNA — The collapse of Communist rule in Eastern Europe is stirring hopes and fears in Austria, which for nearly 40 years has seen itself as a neutral bridge between East and West.

The hope for new economic and cultural opportunities as the artificial postwar barriers dissolve is tempered by fears among Austrians of an unmanageable influx from the Eastern neighbours.

The government is also weighing how the reshaping of the continent's economic map will affect its own top foreign policy objective — steering Austria into the European Community.

Chancellor Franz Vranitzky reflected the optimistic school of thought in an ebullient New Year message to his 7.5 million countrymen.

"In one stroke, the expression 'country in the heart of Europe' does not just have a geographic sense but gains a political, economic and cultural dimension," he declared.

But he rejected the idea that Austria might be some form of political hermaphrodite.

"It is often said Austria lies politically between East and West. That is false. In a political sense Austria belongs to the West," he said.

The end of Communist control and opening up of borders across the region "offer us the greatest opportunities since the collapse of the monarchy (in 1918)," he said.

"Not because, as some people

may imagine, we could again become the centre of a great world empire but because Austria could re-emerge as a cultural power in the world," once again drawing on its diverse roots across the region.

While political commentators waxed lyrical about the chances for the Alpine state, the response within the overwhelmingly bourgeois society, which has grown rich while the Communist neighbours languished, has been ambivalent.

As tens to thousands of Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Poles and East Germans took advantage of new freedoms to take a peek inside the well-stocked stores of Vienna's consumer society, many in the capital became defensive and possessive.

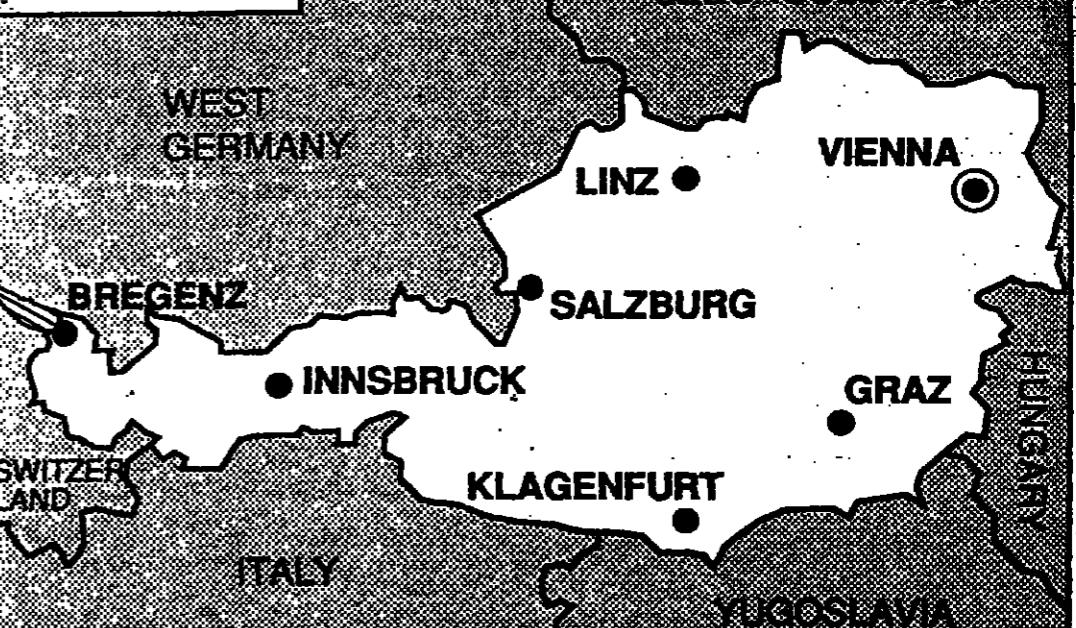
An opinion poll showed that 63 per cent of Viennese found the peaceful invasion across the dismantled iron curtain unwelcome and only 22 per cent said they felt good about it.

Warm-hearted gestures to offer free transport and theatre tickets to the obviously badly-off Eastern visitors drew angry protests from some Viennese who complained of discrimination.

A Polish woman in her 30s who has lived in Vienna for more than four years was told sharply by a native Viennese during a row over a disputed parking place: "Go back to your homeland."

Although the Vienna telephone directory is dominated by non-German names and many of the city's 1.5 million people are

AUSTRIA



themselves refugees from Communist countries, resentment towards foreigners from the East is always near the surface.

A Polish woman in her 30s who has lived in Vienna for more than four years was told sharply by a native Viennese during a row over a disputed parking place: "Go back to your homeland."

Although the Vienna telephone directory is dominated by non-German names and many of the city's 1.5 million people are

it role as a transit and asylum country but tighten its checks on illegal workers.

Many politicians, including

Vranitzky, feel Austria, with its stability and economic success, could be taken as a model by the East Bloc states as they rebuild their economies.

"We too had to start from nothing (after World War II), and today we receive general recognition and respect for our neutrality, our political freedom, our economic success and our

Social Security system," the chancellor said.

Other commentators, like

Eduard Busek who has long cultivated Central European links, injected an element of caution.

Although Busek saw an opportunity for Austria to assert itself as a key player in the heart of Europe, he warned of the danger of the German-speaking country being viewed as a "third German state" or an historic part of the German nation.

Mandela's release offers gains for everybody

By Brendan Boyle
Reuters

CAPE TOWN — Nelson Mandela's release after 26 years in jail looks set to bolster the aims of both blacks and whites in South Africa.

For blacks, it could fill a leadership vacuum and help to reunite the divided anti-apartheid opposition.

For whites, the rewards of releasing the world's most famous political prisoner could include improved credibility in hostile world and possibly a visit from British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

In the longer term, it could promote a negotiated peace after 30 years of low-level guerrilla war between South Africa's white rulers and its disenfranchised blacks, who outnumber them by five-to-one.

Mandela, 71, signalled for the first time Monday that he expects to be freed soon, asking his wife Winnie to begin preliminary

arrangements for his release. "I don't think we are talking about months any longer," she told reporters after visiting Mandela at the Victor Verster Prison 60 kilometers north east of Cape Town.

Mandela, a Johannesburg lawyer, was second in command of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) when he was arrested in August 1962 to face charges that culminated in a life sentence for plotting to overthrow white rule.

ANC members say he holds no title now within the movement that celebrated its 78th anniversary Monday, but he is a member of the policy-making National Executive Committee.

The movement has so far decided to be drawn on whether Mandela could replace ailing President Oliver Tambo, who is being treated in a Swedish clinic for brain damage.

Thabo Mbeki, son of Mandela's friend and former fellow prisoner Govan Mbeki, is widely

arranged for his release, and say radical rivals including militant ANC army commander Chris Hani could oppose him and Mbeki as being too moderate.

"I think Mandela will take leadership, that he will have enormous influence in the ANC," said Fatima Meer, a professor of sociology in Durban and Mandela's personal biographer.

"With the return of Mandela to the disenchanted people there will be a return of the traditional strong voice and guidance that has characterised the ANC."

"He is a consensus man. He wants to understand and he wants to guide. He has tremendous confidence in himself and what we could do for South Africa as a facilitator," she said.

Meer said 30 years of often violent government repression had left the anti-apartheid movement fragmented and leaderless.

Mandela could fill the gap,

rallying squabbling factions in a

united drive against apartheid

and towards a negotiated settlement with President F.W. De Klerk's white government.

"He is going to face huge expectations, but he has the love and the respect of people from all factions, from blacks and whites, even from the traditional leaders."

"Knowing him as I do, I think he is going to do his best to bridge the differences and bring the disenchanted people together."

Meer said she did not expect

African leaders to give Pretoria

much credit for Mandela's release,

but diplomats based in

South Africa disagreed.

"Releasing Mandela

is the

single most important move that the South African government could make," said one diplomat.

"I will transform the situation in many ways, though this act alone will not transform South Africa's relations with the rest of the world. That will depend on what follows," he said.

The diplomats said Mandela's



Risking their life if they are spotted by Israeli soldiers, these youths paint messages to the community from leaders of the uprising.

The writing is on the wall

By Philippa Neave

RAMALLAH — One trick you learn on an ordinary day spent in a town like Ramallah in the occupied West Bank is how to turn a busy shopping street into a war zone in under four minutes: just whistle.

Perhaps it was not such an ordinary day: for one thing, the shops were open. After long days of curfew imposed by the Israeli army that had killed all activity, families were scurrying to gather enough staples to face the next three or four days of curfew when they would have to remain locked in their homes all day and night. So people bustled about in the main street of Ramallah.

Suddenly, a group of youths gathered at the corner of the high street and started to whistle. Like a strange domino-effect, metal shutters slammed down one after the other. Within two minutes the street was deserted. Sirens sounded and seconds later, the street was full of military jeeps, soldiers pounced, sweeping the air with their machine guns. But there was nothing or no-one to shoot at.

The troops went away, but the stores did not re-open. It was a short day for shopkeepers who have lost heavily during two years of Palestinian rebellion. Lucky if they can sell their wares a few mornings here and there. But then any notion of normality is an illusion in the occupied territories: Workers don't work, students don't study, children don't go to school, people can't go out or visit each other, civilized society as it exists in other parts of the world is agonising.

Two years of intifada with its demonstrations, killing of teenagers and children by the Israeli army, curfews, arbitrary arrests, restrictions of movement and school closures have destroyed the social fabric to the point that the breakdown of law and order is almost total. For want of any competent authority, people are making their own rules and taking the law into their own hands.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin estimates that about 40,000 Palestinians have been arrested since the intifada began, many of them more than once. And according to United Nations figures 37,000 have been wounded. West Bank schools reopened last summer after nearly 18 months of closure, but they were ordered to close again recently for two months.

Besides the deaths of children in the streets, one of the most flagrant signs of the disease eating into the social body is the increasing number of executions — or murder, depending on which side you are on — of Palestinians accused of collaborating with the Israeli occupying forces. Twenty years of occupation have produced a substantial crop of people who in some way work or have worked with the Israelis for personal gain, but it seems that recruitment has increased dramatically since the beginning of the uprising.

Said 40-year-old Amira Vitullo, who has lived in the occupied territories for over 10 years: "Before the intifada, the authorities used a limited group of collaborators but did not rely on them for high intelligence; they used them mainly for fraud. It was not a well developed network, they usually chose the marginal elements in society who had already been singled out by the community as third generation collaborators from families who had worked before with the Turks and the British."

American-born Vitullo is married to Palestinian journalist Sami Khoury, a correspondent for the international news agency Agence France Presse who is currently in jail. She has worked on human rights issues and is also a writer who has studied the question of collaborators closely. Things have changed a great deal

since (the beginning of the uprising in) December 1987, she explains: "Now we're seeing a much broader sweep — mass recruiting, it is quantity rather than quality that the (Israeli) authorities are after."

Collaborators reportedly operate in every neighbourhood, village or refugee camp, forming what seems to be an effective network that has spread and misused throughout the communities of the occupied territories where approximately 2.3 million Palestinians live.

Adds Vitullo: "There are different levels of collaborator activities. At the highest level are people who are actually armed by the Israeli authorities and who use their weapons. We estimate that they number several hundred: there's one in every village, and probably 10 in every town.

There are cases when a patrol of Israeli soldiers will be accompanied by the local collaborator to show where houses are that they want to destroy or to point out youths they want to arrest."

Arming collaborators is a recent development. They in turn surround themselves with bodyguards who also carry weapons, effectively constituting a small militia. "There is very active participation in militia activities on the part of the Israeli authorities," Vitullo said.

Instead of receiving weapons, another sort of collaborators are given communication devices, usually 2-way radios, she said.

"That way, they can report on the whereabouts of wanted youths, on activities, when and where demonstrations are going to start, so that the Israeli soldiers can move in immediately." This seems to be most widespread in the Gaza Strip.

In return for their services, collaborators are given different advantages. There are several systems. Some people are given land; others local power, i.e. the power to issue permits and licences as they please. Others are given drugs, or even sexual favours," Vitullo said.

An unexpected development is that Palestinians are shunning the traditional networks of traffickers dealing in arms or drugs because it is said that either they have sold out to the military authorities which control the routes for these two commodities into the territories, or they are in such a compromising position that they

can easily be blackmailed into collaborating.

Methods of recruiting collaborators vary widely, Vitullo said. "There is a known case, in which a high school teacher who was a suspected collaborator invited young students to his house. They were very young and he would lure them into very compromising situations and then used photographs or video tapes to blackmail them into reporting on fellow students and any activities in the school."

"Also, we are seeing very young children, from the ages of 8 or 9 to 13 being beaten just for intimidation. It is a primitive method of recruiting, but it is widely used to scare them into reporting on the activities of other kids in the schools or neighbourhoods."

An age-old method is to plant informers among prisoners. Hassan, who asked that his last name not be used, said he had plenty of time to see how the system works in Israeli prisons. He agreed to an interview the day after he was released from jail, after 45 days in detention. At 27, he has been in and out since he was a young teenager, although no charges have been filed against him.

"First of all, the Israeli military

quite often uses collaborators as interrogators. They also mix them with prisoners and some are actually given prison sentences — up to life — to make them more believable," he explained. "If they can't get information out of you after interrogation, beating or torture, they can throw you into a whole room full of collaborators. After 45 days of interrogation, a prisoner thinks at last he is among his own people. They'll ask him what political group he belongs to and pretend to be friends. You have to be very careful about what you say to whom in prison these days."

Military statistics show that about 170 Palestinians accused of collaborating have been killed during the past two years, with a sharp increase in recent months. Israelis point to the savagery of the killings, while Palestinians list their long list of "martyrs" — more than 700 killed by Israeli troops since the beginning of the intifada. Among the Palestinians killed because of collaborators, people often cite the case of Yasser Abd al Ghosh, who at 17 was known as the "dynamo" or "hero" of Ramallah. "One day

Palestinians have had bad press for supporting, or at least not condemning the killing of collaborators, but said Vitullo: "I have never, ever heard one Israeli, somebody in authority like a member of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament), condemn the killing of a Palestinian child" — World News Link.

Focus on people

'Kiss me — I'm Arabian'

By Marium M. Shahin

SONS AND DAUGHTERS of first-generation immigrants to the United States are often too busy being "real Americans," playing football, cheerleading at school, making honour lists in college and successful in the professional world. Rarely are they known to take their privileges as American citizens to the political arena. Ethnic politics, as many call it, is a phenomenon which has grown throughout the U.S. in the 1980s and is bound to grow further in the 1990s. Whether Hispanic, African, Italian, Greek or Arab-American, ethnic politics is no longer considered strange or anti-American, it has become the trend in a new America that is becoming more multi-cultural and multi-racial than ever before.

Jesse Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition," which has united African, Hispanic and Arab-Americans, is one example of an organised political-ethnic coalition in the U.S. today.

Arab-Americans have been well-adjusted, well-adjusted, integrating, industrious, law abiding and tax-paying citizens for the past 100 years. One thing they have not been, however, is politically active. In fact, many argue that Arab-Americans have been precisely the opposite of that. Fearing retributions and intimidations, they have remained mute in America's political arena — possibly for too long. While ethnic minorities were holding fund-raisers and sporting T-shirts such as "Kiss me — I'm Armenian," many Arab-Americans seemed almost to hide their origins or at best "not make an issue of being an Arab-American." But as the song says "the times are — a — changing," and one Arab-American who broke the monotonous inactivity James Zogby, was in Amman on a private visit earlier this week and agreed to speak to *Focus on People* about the political developments among Arab-Americans.

At 43, James Zogby, the son of immigrant parents from Kaserwan in Mount Lebanon, is one of a growing number of "outstanding" Arab-Americans who may be in the process of changing the face of America.

While America, since its creation, did sport the face of Miss Liberty, it did not always do what it preached. In fact, for many minority groups, who were as loyal to the American Constitution, if not more so than other Americans, equal pay for equal work was as much liberty as they ever saw. While it is not much more than what most countries can hope to offer their citizens, America is different.

America has, by its own definition, become a society to which much of the world looked up to as the land of the free and the brave. Only free and brave are the winners. The partial success of civil rights activist Martin Luther King made him brave and some of his people, at least, free of their social and psychological bondage. As a martyr, he became an American hero, a symbol of American freedom to the world, because he fought and won. Those Americans who marched for a U.S. pullout from Vietnam were called traitors, the maimed soldiers who followed orders to fight the Vietnamese, to save them from themselves, were spat upon once they returned to America. They weren't winners! Enough of America bashing. The point is made. Now let us look at a new beginning.

LIKE most other children of immigrants, James Zogby was never overly concerned about his parental origins, or that they could make him stand out in any way from the rest of "the kids in the class," and therefore it was not until a "disturbing" incident occurred that he became aware of any discrimination from his peers.

"When I was in college in the 1980s," he recalls. "I became very involved in the anti-war movement and the civil rights movement. Many of my classmates were involved as well. In 1987, I was active in a programme called the 'brothers project.' Wounded Vietnamese children were brought to the U.S. to receive medical attention and we, the activists, would help take care of them."

He also recalls the June 1967 war in the Middle East. "The war was covered in a very biased manner by the American media. Many of my fellow anti-war civil rights activists who had protested violently against the napalming of Vietnamese children cheered in joy about the napalming of Arab children in Palestine. They cheered for the 'victor,' Israel. I, to say the least, was numb. One of my fellow activists who was also a member of the Jewish Defence League, looked at me and said: 'You Arab dog.' There was no reason for him to say that. I had not even talked about my Arab origins and had still not been able to comment on the events of June '67, I was too numb. But when he said that I lost my memory. I got mad," Zogby remembers.

In 1971 Zogby and his Irish-American wife went to Lebanon. The immediate reason for the visit was to gather information for his dissertation. "My wife read George Antonius' book 'The Arab Awakening' before we left. While we were in Lebanon we saw so much and talked to so many people. We visited a lot of camps. On the way back my wife looked at me and said, 'James, you know we will never be the same again after this.' It was true," says Zogby.

Zogby obtained a doctorate in comparative religion and a doctoral fellowship from Princeton University. In the late 1970s he founded the Palestine Human Rights Campaign. In 1980, he co-founded the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) with fellow Arab-American James Abu Rizik. In 1982, he organised the "Save Lebanon" campaign. In 1985 he founded the Arab American Institute (AAI).

The Washington, D.C.-based AAI serves a grass-roots constituency of 2.5 million Arab-Americans. The main beneficiaries are urban merchants and grocers. "We got our people in touch with the American system." We got them in touch with aldermen, made them understand that they didn't have to bribe anyone to get a permit. Everyone thinks when Arab-Americans become

politically active, they are all going to sit there and talk about the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. That's not true. Arab-Americans have been around for over 100 years and they have the same problem as all other Americans — schools, taxes, plumbing, urban housing — that should be a "trend," Zogby points out.

Zogby's attempt to move the "Arab-American agenda" into the country's political mainstream has been an uphill battle.

One of the most recent examples of discrimination against Arab-Americans by U.S. politicians came in 1988. The case of the "Dinkins campaign" became a central turning point in the awareness of many Arab-Americans. "We were told bluntly that Arab-Americans need not apply. It was as simple as that. David Dinkins, who is our fellow member in the Rainbow Coalition, felt it would be disastrous for his campaign if it was known that Arab Americans supported him. To say the least, we were furious. Besides being an insult to us, it was an insult to the Jews as well, and I told them that," Zogby recalls. It is known that on several occasions U.S. candidates, running for a variety of public offices, have sent back campaign contributions that came from Arab-Americans.

"We kicked up a big fuss over the Dinkins affair. Our people are like all other Americans and we refuse to accept discrimination on any level. Jewish organisations in the U.S., as far as I know, have nothing to do with what's going on. The candidates fear the wrath of the Jewish voter, should the candidate seem 'pro-Arab' or not," say the candidates.

As far as U.S.-Middle East relations are concerned, "you know if there are other ways to skin that cat... I would love to see a creative approach coming from the U.S. government that would make a stable Middle East peace between Palestinians and Israelis so we can get on to other business," Zogby says. He refers to the Baker plan as "more of the same in the Kissingerian mold."

Success is relative and Zogby admits that Arabs in America have a long way to go, "before we get there."

Some successes have already been made. "In 1988, there were 55 Arab-American delegates to the Democratic convention in Atlanta. Among other things our rallying on the convention floor resulted in the adoption of 10 state convention amendments calling for Palestinian statehood," Zogby points out.

He points out that many Arab-Americans have high ranking public positions. "Over two dozen Arab-Americans are legislators: 24 are mayors; 30 are judges and two are senators."

"We care about our own welfare in America, and yes, we do care about U.S.-Arab relations. That is only natural," Zogby asserts.

"I was pleased with the way the American media were covering the intifada. Although coverage has become less frequent, when it is covered it is covered fairly. Americans now know that Palestinian children are threatening the mightiest military power in the Middle East. Other than the Israeli lobby and the far right Evangelical Christians, Israel hardly has any fans in the U.S. anymore. People are becoming more aware of what it means to have three billion plus of American tax dollars going to Israel. It means U.S. tax dollars are subsidising the occupation. South Lebanon has been annexed by Israel for all practical purposes," Zogby points out.

Zogby is getting involved in another committee. This time it's a committee on common security. "We are going to try to make a transfer from a war-based economy to a welfare or consumption-based economy. The whole military economy grew out of the Marshall plan. But the world has changed. So we hope to do away with weapons and military economies; and attach more responsibility to the tax dollar," he declared.

As a new generation of Arab-Americans grows up in the political arena and their forefathers never knew, Zogby hopes they will be able to contribute more to their respective communities, freedom in America and understanding between Americans and Arabs.

"When I started we had no organisation, no infrastructure. We gave our kids the ADC, the AAUW and the AAI. Now let them fight and let them win. I know they will," Zogby says with confidence.

Announcement from the Government Tenders Directorate

Tender No. 70/89/central Expansion of Zarqa sewage pumping station

Further to the announcement published on 07/11/1989 and 09/11/1989 in the local newspaper concerning the above-mentioned tender. The new date set for bid opening at the Government Tenders Directorate is now at 13:30 on Wednesday, March 14th, 1990 instead of January 13th, 1990. Addendum No. (2) clarifying all questionnaires submitted to the Water Authority and the Government Tenders Directorate will be issued soonest possible.

Eng. J. Salem Qudah
Chief engineer of the Central Tenders Committee
General Director/Government Tenders Directorate

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JORDAN MARKET PLACE

OPEC oil production surges to highest level since 1981

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — Oil production by OPEC nations surged to an average of 23.7 million barrels a day in the final quarter of 1989, the highest level since early 1981, according to estimates released Tuesday.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) said in its monthly oil market report that the 13 nations of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) increased output by about 100,000 barrels a day in December to hit 23.9 million barrels a day, the highest all year.

The strong level, led by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, topped the group's self-imposed production ceiling of 20.5 million barrels a day in the October-December period.

It also was above the new limit of 22 million barrels a day which OPEC oil ministers recently set for the first half of this year. The officials will meet again in March to take a look at market conditions then.

OPEC's supply to the market in the last three months of 1989

States and excess supply of OPEC oil.

The energy agency report estimated demand for the group's oil would run a little more than 21 million barrels a day in the first half of this year.

Private analysts expect OPEC to reduce production in January but not enough to bring it in line with the new supply cap of 22 million barrels a day.

Amill predicted output would be not much under 23 million barrels a day this month. Lucy Mullins, an analyst at the London-based Barclays De Zoete Wedd, also looked for production to run around that level.

Amill said the group's supply was likely to stay strong because of the attractiveness of higher prices to the producing nations.

Moreover, he said, it appeared Saudi Arabia, the group's biggest producer, was determined to maintain its quarter share of OPEC's total production. To do that, the kingdom would have to

increase its output if other countries did.

The energy agency report estimated demand for the group's oil would run a little more than 21 million barrels a day in the last quarter of the year.

Saudi Arabia's oil minister, Hisham Nazer, was quoted recently by OPECNA News Agency as saying the country was producing 5.4 million barrels a day, right at its limit for the first half of the year.

The report estimated Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates produced at about double their quota in December.

The production agreement arranged for the January-June period set Kuwait's quota at 1.5 million barrels a day, sharply up from 1.1 million barrels late last year. Kuwait got a bigger share of OPEC's production pie in an effort to curb its overproduction.

The United Arab Emirates' quota remained the same.

Jordan government seals Sudan accord

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers has endorsed a trade protocol with Sudan for the current year 1990 totalling \$70 million and providing for facilities for the exchange of good between Jordan and the Arab African country.

The \$70 million protocol allocates \$6 million for the operations of the Sudanese and Jordanian trade centres in Amman and Khartoum and \$4 million for trade fairs which each country will organise in the other during the year while the rest will be equally shared in trade exchanges between them.

The protocol provides for a 50 per cent reduction of customs duty on all goods imported from any country from the other, and states that Sudan will import all the needs of cement from Jordan.

The protocol urged both sides to launch a direct maritime transportation route between their respective ports to help transport goods between them and agreed to encourage economic, technological and scientific institutions in Sudan and Jordan to launch close cooperation aimed at serving the socio-economic sectors in both countries.

Comecon shifts focus

SOFIA (R) — The Soviet-led trading bloc Comecon agreed Wednesday to move towards a market-based system to replace four decades of rigid central planning and barter trade, delegates said.

After a two-day session, prime ministers of the 10 Comecon states decided to shift gradually towards trade based on convertible currency and world market prices, they said.

A special commission set up to draft changes to the Comecon statutes will make proposals next month and meet in Prague in mid-March to discuss the plan and to negotiate with a specialised committee to implement the project.

China hopes for new loans from World Bank

BEIJING (AP) — A central bank official has said that China hopes to soon be receiving Western bank loans suspended after last June's military crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing.

There has been contact with the World Bank and "both sides are actively studying the resumption of loans," said Hong Yuncheng, director of the governor's executive office in the People's Bank of China.

Hong said the West's policy of withholding new loans will "gradually be reversed," adding, "we hope the situation will be improved as soon as possible."

Hong also announced that Paul Volcker, former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman, and International Monetary Fund Deputy Managing Director Richard Erb will attend a central banking conference in Beijing next week.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, January 10, 1990

Central Bank official rates

Buy Sell

French franc

Japanese yen (for 100)

Danish guilder

Swiss franc

Swiss franc

U.S. dollar

Pound Sterling

Deutschmark

Swiss franc

U.S. dollar

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilder

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Danish crowns

U.S. dollars

113.9

115.0

445.6

450.1

106.9

107.1

51.9

52.4

184.5

186.3

Iranian parliament approves five-year economic schemes

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's parliament Tuesday approved a five-year development plan which is the centrepiece of President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's programme to rebuild the economy after a decade of war and revolutionary change.

The plan, which allows the use of up to \$27 billion of foreign credit, was approved after a month-long debate, Tehran radio reported. It must be ratified by the overseeing Guardian Council before becoming law.

The plan, as presented to parliament, aims for an ambitious average annual growth rate of eight per cent fuelled by \$83 billion of oil and gas revenues over the next five years.

Investments would total 27.6 trillion riyals (\$394 billion at the official exchange rate) and unemployment would be cut to 14 per cent by creation of nearly two million new jobs.

The budget deficit, which was 51 per cent in the year to March 20, would, all but disappear by 1994 and inflation, officially set at 28.5 per cent last year, would fall to 8.9 per cent.

Defence expenditures would account for \$9.5 billion of the total foreign exchange outlays of \$119 billion over the next five years.

Iranian leaders have said the country must strengthen its defences while peace talks which began after the 1980-88 war with Iraq remain deadlocked.

The plan was originally drafted when Mir-Hosseini Mousavi, an advocate of government control of the economy, was prime minister. But it was amended by Rafsanjani's cabinet and again slightly changed in parliament.

The head of the parliament's plan and budget committee, Mohammad Alavi, told in an interview published last month that the plan had opponents on both ends of the political spectrum.

Traditionalists objected to birth control plans to reduce the 3.2 per cent annual population growth rate, he said, while hardliners said the blueprint opened doors to foreign credits and paved the way for a few to get rich.

Iran's late supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, ruled against direct borrowing from abroad, but senior officials

agreed on using other forms of foreign credit.

Alavi told Tehran radio last week that article 29 of the plan allowed the government to use following foreign credits:

— \$9 billion through project financing to build major agricultural, industrial and mining projects. Credit will be repaid over five years after they begin production.

— \$3 billion of foreign investment to build four dams which would irrigate 300,000 hectares of farmland and produce 5,000 megawatts of electricity.

— Oil ministry to use \$3 billion of foreign credits to develop a joint gas field with Qatar in the Gulf and \$2.2 billion for petrochemical projects.

— \$10 billion tied to buyback schemes to increase utilisation of industries now running at 30 per cent of capacity. Factories would use the credit to obtain primary materials and pay it back by export of their products.

Soviet economic adviser seeks U.S. investments, predicts energy crisis

LOS ANGELES, California (AP) — An energy crisis may follow dire shortages of consumer goods in the Soviet Union this bitter winter, a top Soviet economist says.

"My assessment is that situation is very difficult," said Vladimir Kvint, a deputy to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's chief adviser and a special consultant to Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhikov.

Mondays, Kvint wound up a visit to New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, consulting with U.S. companies interested in joint ventures in the Soviet Union.

"I think that because of wrong decisions, the shortage of soap and washing powder can be followed by a shortage of energy — an energy crisis," Kvint said in an interview with the Associated Press.

Nonetheless, the money changers have been demanding a solution to address their situation after the new government of Prime Minister Mubarik Badran had decided to abrogate the martial law under which the closure of the closure had been taken.

In a memorandum submitted to the Lower House of Parliament last month, the moneychangers called on parliament to review the closure and the legality of the order issued by the government of Prime Minister Zeid Rizvi. The order froze the assets of most moneychangers pending investigations and auditing.

The CBJ announcement Wednesday seemed to have been prompted by reports in the local press that some former moneychangers have resumed in-cognito operations in the downtown areas of Amman.

Wednesday's announcement noted that the CBJ was watching the situation closely in cooperation with the concerned authorities and businesses trading with foreign exchange.

It said that the CBJ was in the process of preparing a draft law designed to organise the moneychanging business in the Kingdom.

Should the government approve of the law, the announcement said, the CBJ would issue new licences to certain moneychanging establishments which had abided by laws and regulations.

They expected an end-1990 rate of between 2,950 and 3,200 riyals to the dollar, compared with 2,304 at end-1989 and 1,815 at the start of last year. The rate Wednesday was 2,315.

"We expect a drop of about 25 per cent this year provided there are no undesirable developments on the political or economic fronts, such as a foreign trade or investment bottleneck," a treasurer at an Istanbul-based bank said.

A state-run bank official said last year's riyal decline of 21.2 per cent, relatively small after a 43.9

per cent fall in 1988, did not occur under free market conditions.

"I think it was administered by the central bank due to inflationary concerns," he said.

The government last year freed bank deposit rates to half a run on the riyal and thus keep inflation down. A government economist said he expected Ankara would pursue similar policies this year.

"There is no sign of an increase in imports. But if such a rise occurs the riyal depreciation could (move closer to) the inflation rate," the bank official said.

The State Planning Organisation has forecast 54 per cent inflation this year after 68.8 per cent in 1989 and 75.2 per cent in 1988.

"The government is (keen to) lower inflation. They will probably pull it below 60 per cent in 1990," Ekrem Onal, head of Financial Services House in Istanbul, told Reuters.

The central bank can force banks to change rates through frequent buying or selling during the sessions, bankers said.

They expected the riyal's drop against the mark this year to be similar to 1989's 25.3 per cent drop. The mark opened 1,022 in January 1989 and 644 a year earlier.

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McEnroe preparing for Australian Open

ADELAIDE, Australia (R) — John McEnroe, who once vowed never to play again in Australia, is making a big effort to prepare for next week's Australian Open despite dismissing it as less important than the other grand slams events.

The former tennis erratic of the tennis circuit commented on the first grand slam of the 1990s as he began his preparations at the four-day "Rip" international challenge in Adelaide.

"I tried to get down here as early as I could to give myself the best chance," the American said.

"I feel like I'm as prepared as I

have been, but it's always a difficult tournament for me."

Last year, he won a rock star's welcome when he returned to the Australian Open for the first time since December 1985, when he had vowed never to play there again after clashes with the media and a stock dealer to Yugoslav Slobodan Zivojinovic.

McEnroe never had his hat off of the cramped old Kooyong courts in Melbourne — the scene of his 1985 debacle — which he once described as "the worst grass court I have ever played on."

He was so incensed by the

"skating rink" conditions that he won a 21-day suspension for one two-word outburst in 1985.

The move to Flinders Park changed all that and this year, despite insisting that the open was "not as important as the other big tournaments," McEnroe said he was making a big effort to accustomise to the Australian summer.

He guided the United States to the Hopman Cup final in Perth last week, only to lose to Spain, and has been travelling with wife Tatjana O'Neal and young sons Kevin and Sean.

The world number four, who reached the quarter-finals last year and the semifinals on grass at Kooyong in 1983 — his best performance at the open — said: "If conditions at Flinders park are reasonable, my chances are good."

"It's tough, if you go out there and it's 40 degrees (Fahrenheit, 60 centigrade) on the court, anything could happen."

But he added: "I couldn't play six or seven straight matches at the top of my game if it's hot."

McEnroe said the open could boil down to the survival of the fittest, favouring world number one Ivan Lendl.

"It's sort of like a crap shoot (dice game). There's not that many guys that are at their best form-wise, but some guys could be very fit at this time... A guy like Lendl, he gets down here early and he's very fit," McEnroe said.

Fitness fanatic Lendl, holder of the Australian crown, is playing in the New South Wales Open where he had an easy first round win over Andrew Sznajder of Canada 6-1, 6-3 on Wednesday.

New South Wales Open:

Mayotte, Shriver fall, Lendl, Becker advance



SYDNEY (R) — Americans Tim Mayotte and Pam Shriver were the big name casualties as the sun finally shone on the rain-soaked New South Wales Open tennis tournament on Wednesday.

Mayotte, seeded fourth in

the tournament, lost to France's Isabelle Demongeot while the seeded Americans Pam Fendick and Ros Fairbank and the Soviet Union's Larisa Savchenko also made early exits.

Mayotte's defeat was his

second to Sampars who, after his

shock win over Sweden's Mats

Wilander at last year's U.S.

Open, is emerging as one of the

United States' bright young

hopes.

Sixth seed Andres Gomez of

Ecuador also fell by the wayside,

beaten 7-5, 6-4 by another American qualifier, David Wheaton.

Top two seeds Ivan Lendl and Boris Becker had no such problems as they cruised confidently into the second round with straight sets win over Canadian Andrew Sznajder and Alexander Volkov of the Soviet Union.

In the women's singles, Cana-

da's Helen Kelesi, the third seed,

was beaten by France's Isabelle

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World News

Moscow shows readiness to accept Lithuanian reform

VILNIUS, Soviet Union (R) — Moscow showed signs of increasing readiness Wednesday to accept a formal break by its Lithuanian Communist comrades and even to exploit the seeming rebuff in its perestroika reform drive.

In a report on the domestic service of Moscow Radio, a correspondent in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, told Soviet listeners an opinion poll showed overwhelming support for last month's move by the Lithuanians to establish a separate Communist Party.

It said 82 per cent of those polled, across a broad cross-section of Lithuanians, approved of the break.

And it said Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev's own popularity has increased of late, while that of the independence mass movement Sajudis has fallen.

The radio's morning news bulletin made clear the reform effort would get a boost from Gorbachev's fact-finding mission to the once-independent republic, set to begin Thursday.

"It would not have been nec-

essary for the Lithuanian party to have taken this decision if changes in the Soviet party had been going more quickly. We all know they are going very slowly," said the report.

The newscast follows conciliatory remarks by Soviet party ideology chief Vadim Medvedev, who Tuesday suggested the Communist Party as a whole could benefit from greater decentralisation.

Medvedev, leading a 40-member delegation ahead of Gorbachev's visit, said a party plenum in Moscow late this month would press for greater freedom for local party organisations.

"The platform must propose a number of radical transformation in the party. It must raise substantially the independence of the Communist Party in the republics, of party organisations and of

the role of each party member," he said in remarks carried by the Soviet News Agency TASS.

Medvedev, clearly on hand to sound out local workers and officials and not give ultimatums, also stoutly defended the party as the leading light of perestroika.

His words were the clearest sign yet that Moscow's party bosses hoped to turn the rebuff from their Lithuanian comrades to tactical advantage in a drive to rid local parties of hardline elements holding back social and economic change.

The Kremlin's softer line, a far cry from earlier warnings that the Lithuanian move could lead to the disintegration of the Soviet party, is expected to face a severe test during the Soviet leader's visit.

Sajudis has announced plans to hold rallies during the visit to press for "freedom and independence."

At the same time, Moscow is under pressure from the country's volatile southern region, which ethnic rivalries and religious passions threaten to set afire.

Armenian party activists Tuesday walked out of their offices in the capital, Nagorno-Karabakh, rather than meet the Azerbaijani Communist Party chief, leaving a high-level delegation alone at the airport.

This public snub of a fellow Communist illustrates the tension between the rival ethnic groups that has erupted in clashes that have caused more than 120 deaths.

Gun battles and assaults by rival groups are a regular feature of life in the disputed territory, administered as part of Azerbaijan but populated mostly by Armenians.

In the Azerbaijani region of Nakhichevan on the Iranian border, a week of rioting by Shi'ite Muslim Azerns seeking closer ties with their Iranian counterparts has damaged border installations and forced officials to promise easier travel.

The Iranian News Agency (IRNA) said a delegation from Tehran met Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze Tuesday to discuss freer movement across their common border.

reports that up to 60,000 Romanians had died in the December revolution alone.

A decree issued Tuesday said Palace Square, where Ceausescu made his last speech before fierce fighting erupted, would be renamed Revolution Square.

Monuments to the dead would be built in Bucharest and the Western town of Timisoara, where the revolution which brought Ceausescu's downfall erupted.

The dictator was toppled from power on Dec. 22 and he and his wife were executed by an army firing squad three days later.

Bucharest and Timisoara were officially declared "towns of the martyrs."

The NSF decree said church services would be held every Friday to commemorate the dead.

Meanwhile Romania's leaders are moving fast to end the

traumatised country's constitutional limbo.

But a senior figure in the NSF responded angrily to charges that democracy was the first casualty of the breakneck pace of change since the bloody end of Ceausescu's rule.

"I think she is very naive politically," Brucan said in response to Cornea's call for workers to demonstrate on the streets rather than lose control of the revolution.

The NSF, an umbrella group of the different forces which toppled Ceausescu, announced further popular reforms.

Brucan confirmed that free election promised by April, the first for more than 40 years, could be delayed if opposition parties wanted more time to prepare.

The lifting of Ceausescu's virtual ban on foreign travel drew more than 1,000 applicants to the passport office in Bucharest.

might be in peril.

Brucan, now in his seventies and a one-time Ceausescu envoy in New York and Washington before moving to open dissent, said Cornea was not serious, responsible or fair.

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Pretoria has nothing to lose in freeing Mandela — Sisulu

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies)

— Black nationalist Walter Sisulu Wednesday put more pressure on South Africa to free African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela, saying Pretoria had nothing to gain by keeping him behind bars.

Sisulu said it was time for Mandela to take his place as a key figure in negotiating a peaceful settlement to South Africa's political stalemate.

"The situation in South Africa is such that it does not depend on Mr. Mandela being in jail... there is no advantage to us, to Nelson Mandela or to the government to keep him in prison," he said on a radio phone-in programme.

Sisulu, jailed with Mandela in 1964 for plotting to overthrow white minority rule, rejected speculation that Mandela's release would ease international pressure on South Africa to give blacks a say in national government.

"As long as apartheid does not change, the world has the right to point the finger at South Africa," he said.

Speculation has reached fever pitch that President F.W. De Klerk will free Mandela within weeks, meeting a condition of the outlawed ANC for talks on ending apartheid.

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